

The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

April 2017

Spring Is In The Air

There are so many reasons to be excited about Spring. Plants are beginning to break through the soil, trees start to bud and blossom, there is more daylight to enjoy--and the list goes on. It is just a plain and simple wonderful season of the year. One thing is for sure—I am delighted I will not see snow again until next year.

There is another reason I love Spring. I love Spring because of Easter. For you see, Easter is much more than chocolate Easter bunnies and a new set of clothes—Easter is the most significant day in the life of the Church universal. For it is on Easter we come together to remember the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. We would have

walked through Palm Sunday when Jesus triumphantly rode into Jerusalem. We would have remembered his last supper on Earth, his praying in the garden—his arrest and torture--and, painfully remember his dying on Calvary's cross and burial in a borrowed tomb. But as bleak as things appeared—thank God for Easter and the resurrection!

When we celebrate Easter, in a way, we are celebrating our own resurrection from sin and death to forgiveness and a new life in Christ. Imagine being on death row and receiving a full pardon from the Governor? Well, a life of sin is an eternal death row and through the blood of Christ and God's grace, we are given an opportunity to plead guilty and yet be forgiven/pardoned and have our record wiped clean. If that

is not something to celebrate and shout hallelujah about, I don't know what is.

So as we enter this brand new month of April—the month that incorporates Holy Week and Easter—may we be reminded of nature's new life that is budding all around us--but may we also be reminded of the new life we have been given in Christ. No resurrection—No Hope. No resurrection—No victory over sin and death. No resurrection—No opportunity to reconcile with God.

Continue on Page 2

WORSHIP IN APRIL

Apr. 2—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, *Anxious for Nothing: God's Prescription for Peace During the Storms of Life*, Philippians 4:2-9

Apr. 9—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, *Hosanna in the Highest*, Luke 19:28-40

Apr. 16—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, *The Stone Rolled Away*, Matthew 28:1-20

Apr. 23—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, *Joy in the Journey of Life: How to be Joyful Always* Philippians 4:4, 1 Thessalonians 5:16

Apr. 30—Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, *A Road Less Traveled*, Luke 24:13-35



Circle of Concern

For Bereavement: Prince family,
McDowell family

For Guidance and Healing:

Steve Rea, Ron Jones, Bruce Kirschner, Kathy Maier, Adrian Murphy's mother, Theresa Lindsay, Sean Abrams, Joy Kala, Eileen Austin, George Werner, Mamie White, Frankie Scott Jr., Lee Hollowell, Henry Prince, Patricia Puk, Luke Gonzalez, Elenor, Deb, Kayla Donovan, Bruce Koffman, Josh Jansson, Edward Collins, Marjorie Bates, Diane Peterson, Luke Sotis, Matthew, Joanne, Fran Edwards, Tom Vogel, Tim Hollowell, Liz, Jessica Deck, John Puk, Barbara Widera, Morales family, Johnny Layton, Trish, Pat Keating, Tracy, Luke, Katie, Mattis Sotis, Stacy Granger, Ernest Ikpe

These Who are Hospitalized:

Shawn Handwerker

These who are in Rehab or Nursing Care Facilities:

Geri Sheridan in Brookhaven Health Care Facility, 801 Gazzolla Drive, E. Patchogue, NY.

John Vander Zalm in Brookhaven Health Care Facility, 801 Gazzolla Drive, E. Patchogue, NY.

Alice Zahnd in Gurwin Jewish Nursing Facility, Commack, NY.

Ed Dew in Sunrise Assisted Living, Waverly Avenue, Holbrook, NY.

Pray for our church and her future directions!

Spring (From Page 1)

However, the good news is that the grave could not hold Jesus. He indeed on the third day rose up from that grave and is interceding for us even now. So may we shout from the rooftops: *"Victory in Jesus, my Savior forever! He sought me and bought me with his redeeming blood; he loved me ere I knew him, and all my love is due him; he plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood."*

Dear friends, Happy Spring! Happy Easter or Resurrection Sunday! Happy Life!

In His Grip,

—Pastor Chuck

Nursing Home Cheer

Thank you to all those who have provided magazines for the nursing homes. The outstretched hands when I visit them attests to the need for reading materials. When I have almost run out of magazines to give out, one of you hands me a bag full to keep the patients supplied. Please keep collecting these magazines/books for our friends in Patchogue's nursing homes. Thank you.

—Dave Hollowell

Easter Baskets

On Easter Sunday during our morning worship, beautiful handmade Easter Baskets will be given to all children attending service. So children should invite their friends.

—Myong Cha Ferrara



Would we be counted among the doubters hiding in the shadow cast by that cruel cross? Or, when challenged, like Peter openly deny you? There are times, Lord when doubts assail and the distance between us seems to increase. There are times, Lord when sin has its hold, like a barrier between us that will not move.

Who is there we can turn to when we feel so overwhelmed? Who can roll away the stone and reveal the empty tomb? No-one but you, Jesus, no-one but you!

—faithandworship.com

United Methodist Church of Patchogue

April 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 7:30 p.m.—AME Service
2 10:00 a.m.— Communion Wor- ship 12:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 5:00 p.m.—AME	3 7:00 p.m.—AA	4 9:30 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon— Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	5 7:30 p.m.—AME Service	6	7 9:30 a.m.—ESL 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—NA	8 7:30 p.m.—AME Service
9 8 a.m.—Palm Sunday Breakfast 10 a.m.—Worship/ Sunday School 12:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 4:00 p.m.—BAFFA 5:00 p.m.—AME	10 7:00 p.m.—AA	11 9:30 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon— Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	12 7:30 p.m.—AME Service	13 7:00 p.m.— Maundy Thursday Service	14 9:30 a.m.—ESL 7:00 p.m.—Good Friday Service 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—NA	15 7:30 p.m.—AME Service
16 10 a.m.— Easter Worship/Sunday School 12:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 5:00 p.m.—AME	17 7:00 p.m.—AA	18 9:30 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon— Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	19 7:30 p.m.—AME Service	20	21 9:30 a.m.—ESL 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—NA	22 7:30 p.m.—AME Service
23 10 a.m.— Worship 11:30 a.m.— Trustees 12:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 5:00 p.m.—AME	24 7:00 p.m.—AA	25 9:30 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon— Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—AA	26 7:30 p.m.—AME Service	27 5:00 p.m.—Wesley Dinner	28 9:30 a.m.—ESL 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 7:30 p.m.—NA	29 7:30 p.m.—AME Service
30 10 a.m.— Worship 12:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF 5:00 p.m.—AME Service						

Churches, Ministries See Fear Over Immigration Policies

The parenting classes offered by Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas aren't what they used to be.

The instruction is the same, but attendance by undocumented Hispanic moms and dads is down. The same goes for the nonprofit's behavioral health clinic services.

"Clients are saying they are scared to come into the clinic for fear of getting pulled over by the police while in transit, and some have even reported pulling their children out of school," said Jessica Muñoz, communications director for San Antonio-based Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas, which focuses on the underserved.

San Antonio is important in the history of Hispanic Methodism, and it's a good place to ask Hispanic United Methodists and others about the early effects of President Trump's stricter approach on immigration. More fear — that's what many say they're seeing. They often illustrate with a story.

Ellen Riojas Clark, a United Methodist and retired professor at the University of Texas at San Antonio, tells of an undocumented woman she knows. The woman's children were born in the U.S., but they've been asking for legal papers to carry, to be able to prove their citizenship.

The children are 7 and 8.

"That to me is the underscore of the whole thing, when it affects chil-

dren of that age, where their own identity is doubted," Clark said. "You better believe it's an issue of fear." President Trump campaigned on building a wall all along the U.S.-Mexico border and on an overall tougher approach to immigration, including more Border Patrol and stepped-up deportations.

The Obama administration moved toward a focus on deporting convicted felons, gang members and others regarded as security threats. A Trump executive order allows Immigration and Customs Enforcement wider latitude.

San Antonio last month had what ICE calls a "targeted enforcement operation," arresting 51 people, 23 with criminal convictions.

"Things are more pronounced," said Abel Vega, director of outreach vitality for the San Antonio-based Rio Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church. "You have now, basically, the perspective of holding to the letter of the law, irrespective of the contextual realities." San Antonio, two hours from the U.S.-Mexico border, is 63 percent Hispanic. Many Hispanic residents are not only U.S. citizens but part of families that have been in the area for generations — in some cases before the Anglos came.

San Antonio also has its share of recent arrivals who slipped across the border, Mexicans mainly, but also Central Americans.

For Hispanic Methodism, San Antonio represents home base, having been the headquarters for the old Rio

Grande Conference—a grouping of Hispanic United Methodist churches, now mostly part of the Rio Texas Conference.

At La Trinidad United Methodist, founded in 1876 as the San Antonio Mexican Mission, the Rev. John Feagins proudly shows off the church's remarkable archives, including original handwritten letters from Methodist missionaries who worked on both sides of the border.

These days, La Trinidad has services in English and Spanish, and the congregation overwhelmingly consists of U.S. citizens. But some who attend worship or participate in the church's outreach ministries are undocumented.

Feagins said the congregation includes a few Trump supporters, but most oppose the new approach to immigration and worry about the fate of undocumented people in their midst.

"I feel for them," said Javier Noriega, the church's lay leader. "They're poor people, and they come here and do jobs our people don't want to do."

La Trinidad employs part time a young woman who was brought to the U.S. illegally as a child and has been protected under the Obama Administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

La Trinidad is the church home for several "Dreamers," youth and young adults whose undocumented parents brought them to the U.S. as small children. While the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals pro-

gram has given some of them a reprieve from deportation and granted them a work permit, their future is uncertain under the Trump administration.

"I'm particularly concerned for these Dreamers who have only known the United States, and this church, as their home," said Feagins, a bilingual pastor married to the Rev. Raquel Cajiri Feagins, associate pastor at La Trinidad, a Bolivia native and a naturalized U.S. citizen.

La Trinidad also is a site for Academia América, a San Antonio nonprofit offering classes to legal residents hoping to attain citizenship. One recent Wednesday evening, a handful of older students took a break from a flash-card workout on U.S. history and government, and chatted about what they're experiencing.

Aida Martinez, a home health care worker, said her nephew had recently been deported.

"We're worried even though we have papers," class member Juan Martinez said through an interpreter, and others in the room nodded. While not predominately Hispanic, Travis Park United Methodist Church has been active in San Antonio's Interfaith Welcome Coalition, providing emergency shelter to Central American mothers and children who have been detained and released by ICE, pending hearings.

Travis Park also, through Corazon Ministries, regularly offers a meal and Bible study to homeless people and others. Some who queue up early and come through the doors of the downtown church are undocumented.

"You saw the line out there," said Lori Chidgey, executive director of Corazon Ministries. "We're kind of a target for ICE to show up."

Travis Park currently displays a banner saying "We stand with our Muslim neighbors" and plans to have another soon saying "We stand with our Jewish neighbors," a response to anti-Semitic incidents.

The church staff is struggling with whether to have a "We stand with our immigrant neighbors" banner after that.

"The concern was that if we advertise too publicly about that, it might draw attention to the folks who were standing outside (in the Corazon Ministries line)," said the Rev. Monte Marshall, senior pastor.

Retired United Methodist Bishop Joel Martinez lives in San Antonio and is a longtime social-justice advocate, including for immigrants.

He applauds Travis Park for taking care not to do more harm than good in advocacy. Martinez also said he's been encouraged that some top local law enforcement officials in Texas are resisting working closely with ICE. "Those are signs of hope," he said. Other United Methodists are quick to speak of the anxiety they're seeing and feeling.

Abby Gutierrez is a La Trinidad United Methodist member and coordinator for the United Methodist-sponsored Justice for Our Neighbors legal clinic based at Emanuel United Methodist Church in San Antonio.

Gutierrez said the local Justice for Our Neighbors is getting requests from undocumented people who

want to sign a power of attorney regarding child custody.

"They say, 'I want to have a plan for my kid. If I get picked up by ICE at work or wherever we are, they'll be cared for,'" Gutierrez said.

Gutierrez was born in Mexico and brought to the U.S. as an infant when her pastor father found work with the Rio Grande Conference. She's long had permanent resident status, but decided to become a citizen, to vote against Trump.

She didn't complete the process in time, but now awaits only her swearing-in ceremony. It can't come fast enough for her 8-year-old daughter, who heard at school about stepped-up deportations.

"She knows I'm not a citizen," Gutierrez said. "She's like, 'Mommy, are you going to get sent back?' I said, 'I hope not.' Even kids that age are picking up on what's happening. They're afraid."

—Sam Hodges, UMNS



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The deadline for the May issue
of **The Link** is **April 21.**

Please email your copy to gbhoag@optonline.net.



"Hope the choir does some
hip-hop for Easter!"



A Note About Restoring Hope

Our Restoring Hope capital campaign was completed several years ago but funds may continue to be contributed. All Restoring Hope contributions go to the Trustees who have continuing building expenses but no other revenue source. \$500 a month in Trustee funds go to pay off our boiler loan. Contributions can be made to either "Restoring Hope" or "Trustees".

Before I Die, I Want To _____

One day, not far from her home in New Orleans, artist Candy Chang noticed a large abandoned building.

"I thought about how I could make this a nicer space for my neighborhood," she said during her TED Talk, "and I also thought about something that changed my life forever. In 2009, I lost someone I loved very much... Her death was sudden and unexpected. And I thought about death a lot, and this made me feel deep gratitude for the time I've had and brought clarity to the things that are meaningful to my life now. But I struggle to maintain this perspective in my daily life. I feel like it's easy to get caught up in the day-to-day and forget what really matters to you."

With permission from the town and her neighbors, Chang turned the eyesore into a work of art. She covered one side of the house with chalkboard paint. Then, she stenciled a few words on the wall approximately 80 times. The stencil read, "Before I die I want to _____."

She put a bucket of chalk near the wall.

Before the wall was finished people were stopping by, asking if they could write on it. She reported on the TED Radio Hour that one of the first people to finish the sentence was dressed as a pirate, as people in New Orleans are wont to do. He finished the sentence, "Before I die I want to be tried for piracy."

In her TED Talk, she reads some other things people wrote on the wall.

Before I die, I want to straddle the International Date Line.

Before I die, I want to sing for millions.

Before I die, I want to plant a tree.

Before I die, I want to hold her one more time.

Before I die, I want to be completely myself.

After playing that clip from her TED Talk, host of the TED Radio Hour Guy Raz, explained, "The power of the 'Before I die...' wall is that it actually didn't make people think about death so much as it made them think about life."

When Chang posted a few photos of the wall online, she was surprised how quickly the idea spread. "My inbox blew up with messages from people around the world who wanted to make a wall with their community." Today there are more than 1,000 "Before I die..." walls in cities all over the world.

Asked about their death, people talked about life, real life, exciting things they would like to do with their lives. People focused on things of life that really matter.

In the interview Raz asks Chang what she has learned about death. "I think that contemplating it can lead to a lot of great things," she says. What a great image for reflection during Lent. Contemplating death can lead to a lot of great things.

Jesus taught this to his disciples as he contemplated his own death. Preparing his disciples for his glorification, Jesus says, "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it can only be a single seed. But if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24 CEB).

Life, real life, abundant life, comes when we are willing to die to self.

Later in her interview with Guy Raz, Candy Chang expounds on the thought. "Contemplating death really clarifies my life and regularly contemplating death," she continues, "has been a really powerful tool for me to restore perspective and remember the things that make my life meaningful to me."

In a lot of ways, that is exactly what this season of Lent is all about. A time to restore perspective and remember the things that make life meaningful.

And so we fast. We give up chocolate or Starbucks or soda, not just to do it. Not to prove anything to anyone or to impress God. We give it up to remind ourselves that those things don't really matter. Our life in Christ does.

We worship on Ash Wednesday reflecting on our sin, asking for forgiveness, and seeking to live a new life free from it. We don't do this for a front row ticket to heaven, but because we know we have short-changed life by living our own way rather than God's.

Continued on Page 8

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 Fellowship Coffee Hour—11 AM
 Hearing assistance provided



Before I Die (from Page 7)

We receive ashes on the first day of Lent with the words, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” We remember our mortality, not to be morbid, but to remember to live for God now, because our life is a precious gift that we should live to the full.

Like Candy Chang, we struggle in daily life to maintain a perspective on what gives our lives meaning. “It’s easy to get caught up in the day-to-day and forget what really matters to you.” Lent invites us to remember what gives our lives life.

During these 40 days, how will you restore perspective and remember the gifts you’ve received from the

Lord Jesus Christ that make life full and meaningful?

Then maybe you’ll be ready to truly live.

Before I die, I want to _____.
 Think about it.

—Joe Iovino, UMNS

Palm Sunday Breakfast

It’s an annual tradition.
 Don’t miss our Palm Sunday Breakfast, Sunday, Apr. 9, 8:00–9:30 a.m.

Pancakes, bacon, sausages, scrambled eggs and maybe a surprise or two. A great family event.

It’s all sponsored and prepared by the men of our church.

**“Did I not tell you
 that if you believed,
 you would see
 the glory of God?”**



John 11:40, NRSV